Unit .36

Session .01

The Redeemer Reveals His Glory

Scripture

Revelation 1:9-20

9 I, John, your brother and partner in the affliction,
kingdom, and endurance that are in Jesus, was on
the island called Patmos because of the word of God
and the testimony of Jesus. **10** I was in the Spirit
on the Lord's day, and I heard a loud voice behind
me like a trumpet **11** saying, "Write on a scroll what
you see and send it to the seven churches: Ephesus,
Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia,
and Laodicea." **12** Then I turned to see whose voice
it was that spoke to me. When I turned I saw seven
golden lampstands, **13** and among the lampstands
was one like the Son of Man, dressed in a robe and
with a golden sash wrapped around his chest. **14** The
hair of his head was white as wool—white as snow—
and his eyes like a fiery flame. **15** His feet were like
fine bronze as it is fired in a furnace, and his voice
like the sound of cascading waters. **16** He had seven
stars in his right hand; a sharp double-edged sword
came from his mouth, and his face was shining like
the sun at full strength. **17** When I saw him, I fell
at his feet like a dead man. He laid his right hand on
me and said, "Don't be afraid. I am the First and the
Last, **18** and the Living One. I was dead, but look—I
am alive forever and ever, and I hold the keys of death
and Hades. **19** Therefore write what you have seen,
what is, and what will take place after this. **20** The
mystery of the seven stars you saw in my right hand
and of the seven golden lampstands is this: The seven
stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the
seven lampstands are the seven churches.

Intro Options

Main Point:
The victory of Christ motivates endurance in the gospel.

Remember, this icon means there is a Leader Pack item that goes with the lesson. See Leader Pack for additional instructions.

Option 1

Ask each of your students to imagine they were granted authority over one thing: what would they choose and why? They could choose to have authority over something tangible, like the animal kingdom or the weather; or they could choose to have authority over something intangible, like time or the economy. Give them a moment to think of their answers and then to share them. Who had the most original answer? What themes showed up across the board? Why did people want authority over certain things? How would they use their authority?

Consider what things Jesus has authority over. Why does He have such authority? How does He use that authority? In today's session, we'll see that Jesus has authority over everything, including death and hell.

Option 2

Imagine someone provides a huge gift to your student group: they can pick any one person in the world to come spend one evening with them. They have to agree unanimously on one person. Who would it be? Have them come up with a list of potential people and then whittle it down until they have one person left. Who was it?? Why?

Next have them imagine the reverse: if there were any one person in the world they would not want to come spend an evening with the youth group, who would it be? Why would they not want that person?

Use their answers as a segue into the session. Why did they not want certain people to visit? Why did they want others? Does the thought of Jesus coming excite us or terrify us? How is He better than even the person we picked to visit? How might He be more terrifying than the person we didn't want to come? And yet, Jesus is already present in His church, though not as gloriously as He one day will be. How does Jesus' current presence and future glory affect the kind of people we are?

TEACHING PLAN

Read Revelation 1:9-16.

The apostle John wrote from the island of Patmos, where he was being persecuted because of the gospel (v. 9). He told the churches he was their partner in "the affliction, kingdom, and endurance that are in Jesus" (v. 9). On a Sunday, Jesus appeared to John in a vision and told him to write down the things that he saw and send them to the churches.

- **What did John mean when he called himself their partner in "the affliction, kingdom, and endurance that are in Jesus" (v. 9)?**

John was their partner in affliction because of persecution for the gospel. Christians share one Lord and gospel, so we are partners in the suffering associated with those things. Much like Paul said he shared in Christ's sufferings (Phil. 3:10), we share in each other's suffering as Jesus' body. He was their partner in the kingdom as well, indicating that our shared suffering will also result in a shared honor and glory. This calls us to partner in endurance, persevering together in affliction that we may inherit the kingdom together. All these things are "in Jesus" (v. 9), who Himself suffered, endured, and reigns forever.

- **How can other people being present motivate you when you'd rather give up?**

If you've ever run a long-distance race or participated in a tough off-season workout, you know how motivating it is to have other people pushing you to keep going. John had a vision of Jesus "among the lampstands" (v. 13). The risen Jesus is near to His afflicted, enduring church. The presence of our victorious Savior, and of other believers, gives us the strength and the courage to live for Him through the toughest of times.

Read Revelation 1:17-18.

What's the proper response to Jesus' glory? To fall face down in surrender, to recognize His holy majesty, and to sense that you are doomed apart from His grace. That was John's response to Jesus' glory. And yet, Jesus reached down to lift him up. It's amazing that the Lord of glory reaches down with love; that He has all power in His hands and yet uses them with gentle care. It reminds us of Psalm 103 – The Lord has compassion on those who fear Him, for He knows our frame, that we are dust (Ps. 103:13-14). Christ's presence felt lethal, but His touch was life-giving.

- **How do these verses motivate us to live with courage?**

The only One who is to be feared said, "Do not be afraid" (v. 17). If the eternal God says to fear not in His presence, whose presence could possibly bring fear? When you are living for the One who died, yet lives forever, you can be assured that the eternal gains will outweigh the present losses. When the One who holds the keys to death and Hades calls you His own, the fear of death and the fury of hell cannot keep you from living for Christ. A vision of the risen Jesus ought to embolden even the most timid Christian.

1. James Hamilton Jr., Revelation: The Spirit Speaks to the Churches. (Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway, 2012) p. 43-44.
2. Kevin DeYoung, Twitter post, October 14, 2020, 2:15 p.m., https://twitter.com/RevKevDeYoung/status/1316457513676673032
3. Daniel L. Akin, David Platt, and Tony Merida, Christ-Centered Exposition: Exalting Jesus in Revelation (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2016).

COMMENTARY

Main Point:
The victory of Christ motivates endurance in the gospel.

Revelation 1:9-16

"John is their partner in tribulation because the kingdom of Jesus is one that is entered through the patient endurance of suffering…Unlike the Roman Empire, which promised peace but delivered brutality and fear, the kingdom of God promises tribulation and delivers peace and confidence and eternal salvation to those who patiently endure."[1]

"We don't need to go seek out "persecution" by being as obnoxious as possible and then wearing it as some badge of honor, but we must not change how we live, what we believe, or what the Bible says one iota in an effort to court the favor of the world."[2]

"He is a God whose presence gives us assurance. The Lord knows what is happening in His churches, for He is continually among them."[3]

Activity

Ask students to come up with a list of places or situations where they would not want to go alone. The answers might look different for different people. Some people might not want to go to a foreign country alone; others might not want to go to a public bathroom alone; others might not want to go ask a girl out or ask a teacher for help alone.

Break students into small groups. Have each group pick one place or situation from the list you made. They should make two short scenes: first, one where someone has to go to the place or situation alone; second, one where the someone goes to the place or situation with someone else. Why is the second one easier? What does having someone else there help?

Now consider the idea from today's session that Jesus' mighty presence is always with His church. What are some places Christians traditionally fear to go? Note that some answers will be geographic (e.g., the inner city or places where Christians are persecuted); others might be non-literal (e.g., trying to witness to a family member, trying to reconcile with an old foe). How does Jesus' presence encourage us to go to these hard places after all? If time allows, have students repeat the exercise: make a skit with Christians not wanting to go somewhere, and then a second scene showing how Jesus' presence gives us strength to go to such hard places. Discuss some hard places in our lives that we should be going and how Jesus' presence among us strengthens us to take His light to those places.

99 Essential Doctrines (p. 80, DDG)

48. Jesus' Deity

Within the person of Jesus Christ, there are two natures—the divine nature and the human nature. Scripture teaches He is fully divine and fully human. His divinity is on display in passages that describe Him as being equal with God (John 1:1-18; Phil. 2:5-11; Col. 1:15-20; Heb. 1:1-3). The New Testament also points to the deity of Christ by showing how He possesses attributes that God alone possesses (Mic. 5:2; John 1:4), how He performs works that only God performs (Mark 2:5-12; John 10:28; 17:2), and how He Himself claims to be the Son of God (Matt. 26:63-64; John 8:58; 10:30; 17:5).

TEACHING PLAN

▪ What do these verses reveal about Jesus' identity?

Jesus called Himself the "First and the Last" (v. 17). God alone is first; He is the beginning of all things. And He alone is Last; for He determines the ending and reigns eternally. Death could not hold Him (Acts 2:24); therefore, Jesus is the "Living One" (v. 18). The risen Jesus has authority over death. God alone has ultimate power over life and death. So, Jesus is saying that He is God.

Read Revelation 1:19-20.

Jesus instructed the apostle John to write what he had seen, and also "what is, and what will take place after this" (v. 19). This is a good summary of the Book of Revelation —it speaks to both the present age and the age to come, calling us to live in the present in light of the ending.

▪ How does knowing the ending motivate endurance in the present?

Would you try out for that team if you knew you would make it, or that part in the musical if you knew you would get it? Of course! Would you go behind your parents' back or make that poor decision if you knew you would get caught and there would be consequences? Of course not—at least, I hope not! The Book of Revelation functions in a similar way. It reveals the end result of living for Jesus or living against Jesus. This should motivate endurance for those who are following Christ and motivate repentance for those who are turning away from Him.

COMMENTARY

Main Point:
The victory of Christ motivates endurance in the gospel.

Revelation 1:17-18

"The Son of man tenderly lays His right hand on John, an expression of love and an imparting of strength, that the apostle's drooping and exhausted frame revives and he arises."[4]

"I am the First (protos) and the Last (eschatos)." This is said of God in Isaiah 44:6 and 48:12 and also of Jesus in Revelation 1:17; 2:8; and 22:13. He is God, absolute Lord both of creation and history. He starts and He finishes. He is before all and He is after all. All is under His sovereign control."[5]

Revelation 1:19-20

"Jesus now becomes our teacher and interpreter. He informs us that the seven stars are the seven angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches we see in chapters 2–3. Many times, but not every time, symbols will be explained for us. This is a blessing and an act of divine grace. Christ gives us spiritual insight at this point as we prepare to move ahead. Then, as now, He looks for those who have ears to hear what the Spirit says (2:7,11,17,29; 3:6,13,22). This Word was made clear in chapter 1; of that there is no doubt. Were we listening?"[6]

"Revelation, rightly understood, had a word for the first-century church. Rightly understood, it has had a word for the church throughout history. And rightly understood, it has a word for the church today and tomorrow. At the heart of that word, that message, is this: Gaze on the exalted and glorified Christ. He walks among His churches and His people as the glorious Son of Man."[7]

4. William Hendrikson, More than Conquerors: An Interpretation of the Book of Revelation. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1998). p. 57.

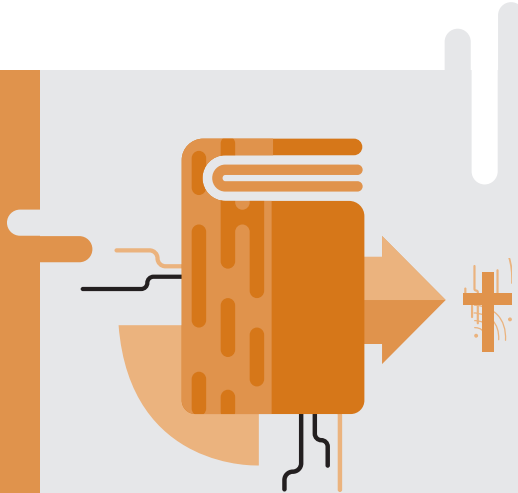
5. Dr Daniel L Akin (2017). (p. 25). Christ-Centered Exposition Commentary: Christ-Centered Exposition: Exalting Jesus in Revelation. Retrieved from https://app.wordsearchbible.lifeway.com

6. Ibid., p.36

7. Ibid.

(p. 81, DDG) Christ Connection

When Jesus revealed Himself to John, He pointed to His identity as the First and the Last, the Living One. He also pointed to the work He accomplished while on earth—defeating death and hell through His crucifixion and resurrection. The same Jesus who was once crucified in shame is the Jesus who is now exalted in glory.



THE REDEEMER REVEALS HIS GLORY

Revelation 1:9-20

THE REDEEMER REVEALS HIS GLORY

The victory of Christ motivates endurance in the gospel.

JESUS CONNECTION

Jesus declared that He is the First and the Last, the Living One. He defeated death and sin through His crucifixion and resurrection. The same Jesus who was once crucified in shame is the Jesus who is now exalted in glory.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

COURAGE – Boldly doing the right thing, even in difficult circumstances.

HEAD

When John had a vision of Jesus, what did Jesus ask John to do?

How did John describe Jesus in his vision?

HEART

John was exiled to the island of Patmos because he was sharing the gospel. How would John's vision of Jesus help him to have courage to continue to talk about Jesus?

What fears keep you from doing the right thing? How does remembering that Jesus is a powerful, holy King give you the courage to live God's way, no matter what?

HANDS

Jesus told John, "Don't be afraid. I am the First and the Last, and the Living One. I was dead, but look—I am alive forever and ever, and I hold the keys of death and Hades." In other words, Jesus has complete control of all things, including the future. When you are nervous or anxious, this truth can provide courage to keep going and to do what's right. What would it look like to have courage in these situations?

- You've struggled with math class all year, and if you fail this week's test, you won't pass the class
- A good friend suddenly starts spreading rumors about you, and now no one wants to sit with you or show support for you
- A close family friend is waiting to find out whether they have cancer